

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A connector comprising a housing (20) for receiving at least one terminal fitting (10) and a retainer (40) for locking the terminal fitting (10) in the housing (20), wherein:

the retainer (40) comprises a main body (41) with at least one locking section (45) for locking the terminal fitting (10) when the retainer (40) is mounted at a proper mount position (FIGS. 11-13) with respect to the housing (20), and side plates (42) at opposite lateral ends of the main body (41) for at least partly covering outer surfaces (29) of the housing (20), and

the housing (20) comprises protecting portions (35) for covering peripheral ends (42a) of the side plates (42) from outer sides when the retainer (40) is mounted at the proper mount position.

2. The connector of claim 1, wherein holding means (30; 31; 33; 49; 53) for holding the retainer (40) at the proper mount position are provided on the side plates (42) and the outer surfaces (29) of the housing (20).

3. The connector of claim 2, wherein the holding means (30; 31; 33; 49; 53) comprise holding portions (30; 31; 33) on the outer surfaces (29) of the housing (20) and locks (49; 53) on inner surfaces of the side plates (42) and engageable with the holding portions (30; 31; 33).

4. The connector of claim 3, wherein the side plates (42) are resiliently deformable away from the outer surfaces (29) of the housing (20) as the locks (49; 53) move onto the holding portions (30; 31; 33) during mounting and detaching the retainer (40).

5. The connector of claim 4, wherein escaping surfaces (36; 55) are provided on at least one of facing surfaces of the protecting portions (35) and the side plates (42) for letting the side plates (42) resiliently deform away from the corresponding outer surfaces (29) of the housing (20).

6. The connector of claim 5, wherein the escaping surfaces (36; 55) are provided on both the facing surfaces of the protecting portions (35) and the side plates (42), and the protecting portions (35) are formed to be substantially flush with outer ends of the side plates (42).

7. The connector of claim 6, wherein the escaping surfaces (36) of the protecting portions (35) have a more moderate inclination than the escaping surfaces (55) of the side plates (42).

8. The connector of claim 1, wherein a clearance (54) is defined between the retainer (40) and a portion (27) of the housing (20) when the retainer (40) is position at a position different from the proper mount position, so that an inserted state of the male terminal fitting (10) can be confirmed through this clearance (54) from outside the housing (20).

9. The connector of claim 1, wherein at least one weakened portion (50) is provided in the side plates (42) for making the side plates (42) easier to deform away from outer surfaces (29) of the housing (20).

10. The connector of claim 1, wherein locking means (49; 30; 31) are provided for holding the retainer (40) at a position (FIGS. 7-10) on or in the housing (20) different from the proper mount position.

11. The connector of claim 1, wherein guiding means (49; 30) are provided on the side plates (42) and the outer surfaces (29) of the housing (20) for guiding movement the retainer (40) with respect to the housing (20).